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**Town Hall is Open
Again at 55 Main Street**

Employee Spotlight:

Police, Fire, and Highway Departments for their extraordinary efforts in handling our 20 inch snowstorm this month.

Meg Mizzoni for her recent article in the Westford Eagle about dog sled racing.

Everyone who helped make the move back into Town Hall a success.

Watch Meetings Online



www.westfordcat.org

Visit
www.westfordma.gov
for current news and
information.

Dear Westford Residents,

January 2011

On behalf of the town hall staff, I would like to thank our residents for providing us with the newly renovated Town Hall. We moved in Christmas week, and have been steadily unpacking and getting our new offices organized. I would also like to thank our town employees for their efforts coordinating in advance, and actively participating in the relocation of offices. Alice Ferro, Town Accountant, and her staff (Terry, Liz and Dawn) did not skip a beat, and kept all financial operations on track despite their computers and offices being moved. Kaari Mai Taari, Town Clerk, and her staff (Patty, Rita and Marilyn...and resident volunteer Bob Oliphant) did a tremendous job of organizing and moving the town's files from 515 Groton Road into the new building and archives. Many town and school custodians assisted (Andrew, Don, John, and Willy) with various parts of the move, and Bill Kenison for overseeing the moving contractors. Our IT Director, Chris McClure and staff (Tom, Scott, Kevin, and Kate) did an outstanding job of disconnecting and reconnecting all computers and telephones. A special thanks to John Mangiaratti, Assistant Town Manager for working with the Permanent Town Building Committee on completing the project, and for his efforts coordinating the entire move, and helping staff get situated in their new offices. The building is beautiful, and I encourage you to stop by and visit. We will be hosting a Grand Re-opening Event in February to celebrate the completion of this important project.

The Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee will be reviewing the revised FY12 town budget at their joint meeting on January 25, 2011. The Budget Solutions Task Force has made some recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee, which include supporting the revised FY12 budget - which is level funded for town operations, and allows a 2.5% increase for the schools. The task force recommends the Board of Selectmen sponsor an article on the town meeting warrant to adopt local meals and hotel excise tax, which will help offset expected revenue reductions from the state. The task force also recommends that FY12 salaries be held at FY11 levels, and they supported my recommendation of health insurance plan design changes.

The Board of Selectmen will begin reviewing warrant articles for our March 26, 2011 Annual Town Meeting at their next meeting on January 25th. Please consult our website for our Annual Town Meeting timeline: www.westfordma.gov/townmeeting. Congratulations and a special thank you to the Conservation Commission, Angus Jennings, and Bill Turner for their efforts in securing 70 acres of conservation land located off of Hildreth Street. This new acquisition will result in approximately 210 acres of contiguous protected land for our town to enjoy. Please see further details in the Conservation Commission section of this newsletter.

My best wishes to each of you for a very happy, healthy new year.

Sincerely,



HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT NEWS

The Highway Department has been busy treating town roadways and patching potholes, ensuring road conditions are safe as possible for commuters. We do our very best to conduct winter operations in a timely manner. Main roads and hills are addressed first and then we proceed to subdivisions and cul-de-sacs. We appreciate residents' patience as we cover over 175 miles roadway and your help with keeping speeds down during inclement weather. Read the updated Snow and Ice Procedures at www.westfordma.gov/highway.



Treating the roadway with liquid anti-ice solution



Used Sharps Program



The Health Department will now collect used sharps (syringes and lancets) from Westford residents only. Collection sites are at the Health Department located on the 2nd floor of Town Hall, or at the Kiosk located in the Police Department entry way. All materials must be delivered in a sharps container and it is requested that containers are full before dropping them off. This will help avoid unnecessary costs pertaining to disposal of the materials. No commercial businesses may use this service. Please follow these directions to ensure proper disposal of sharps containers:

- No Loose Needles
- All Sharps must be disposed of in a sharps container
- If you do not have a personal sharps container, you may use a puncture resistant container such as a one gallon bleach bottle; a one pound sealed and taped coffee can or a 1.5 liter plastic soda bottle.
- No glass containers.
- No plastic or paper bags.
- Do not leave any items outside the kiosk or office.
- Ask for assistance if Kiosk is full.

For additional information contact the Health Department at 978-692-5509.

Educational Program on Stroke Prevention

Stroke is the Number 3 cause of death and the leading cause of adult disability in the United States, yet only one in four people recognizes all the signs of stroke. To increase knowledge of stroke, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health developed the Stroke Heroes Act FAST Program. The program teaches the importance of the FAST model (Face, Arm, Speech, and Time) for recognizing and responding quickly to the signs and symptoms of stroke. Facts about stroke and reducing your risk will also be discussed. This information can be lifesaving for yourself or a loved one. To register, contact the Health Department at 978-692-5509.

Date: February 8, 2011

Time: 8am

Place: Cameron Senior Center, at the Men's Breakfast



HEALTH DEPARTMENT NEWS

Pages 3-4

ServSafe Food Safety Training Course



The Health Department is happy to be once again offering a two-day Serve Safe food safety training course. ServSafe is nationally accredited, recognized and often required by State and Federal Food Codes depending on the nature and menu of a particular food event in Massachusetts. The course will be made available for members and organizations of Westford's Community.

The cost to audit the lecture portion of the course is free for Westford residents, non-profits, members of local community organizations and food establishments; however the text books and answer exam sheets are \$70.00. Space is limited to the first 35 applicants and is open to only one applicant per organization. All book fees must be received at the Health Department, located at Town Hall 55 Main Street, no later than February 18th, 2011. Depending on space availability, The Health Department may open the course to more than one applicant per organization. At the time of registration please provide your name, the company or organization you are associated with, address, day time & evening phone number along with a valid email address. To obtain more information please call the Westford Health Department office at 978-692-5509.

Dates: Wednesday March 23rd and Wednesday March 30th 2011
Time: 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Location: Millennium School, 23 Depot Road in the All Purpose Meeting Room



WATER DEPARTMENT NEWS

Fluoride

The current recommended adjusted fluoride levels in drinking water, which is determined for each state by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is a range from 0.7 ppm to 1.2 ppm (parts per million)

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) HHS is proposing that recommended adjusted fluoride levels be consistent for each state at 0.7ppm.

The Westford Water Department (WWD) adds fluoride to the drinking water supply to the Massachusetts standard, which is between 0.9 to 1.2 ppm. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has stated that there is no public safety concern about fluoridation at this recommended level in Massachusetts. The WWD is aware of the proposed HHS recommendations and will review our processes in light of the final recommendation. We will also pay close attention to regulatory developments and stand ready to respond.

For more information click on the below websites:

Environmental Protection Agency:

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/bd4379a92ceceec8525735900400c27/86964af577c37ab285257811005a8417!OpenDocument>

Massachusetts Department of Public Health:

http://www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dph/com_health/oral_health/mdph_fluoridation_statement.pdf

Fire Hydrants

Now that winter is here please remember to keep your local hydrant clear of snow to allow quick and easy access by Fire Department personnel during an emergency. Any help in keeping the hydrants shoveled out is greatly appreciated.

Perchlorate

Construction at the Nutting Road Perchlorate Treatment Facility is completed, and testing of the plant is in progress. It is expected that the facility will be brought online sometime between February and March. This facility uses an ion-exchange resin to remove perchlorate from Cote and the new Stepinski wells prior to entering the existing Nutting Road Treatment Plant for further treatment to remove iron and manganese.



CONSERVATION COMMISSION NEWS

Pages 6-7

Conservation Commission completes purchase of 42.5 acres of land east of Hildreth Hills, North of Rt. 495

In late December the Conservation Commission completed a purchase of approximately 42.5 acres of land from Leonard Schwab using CPA funds, in the amount of \$200,200.00. A permanent conservation restriction will be placed on the land, and held by the Westford Conservation Trust.

The land is located between Hildreth Hills and Rome Drive. As seen on the accompanying map, this land adds to an already extensive area of protected open space in this part of the town.

Natural Features of Land

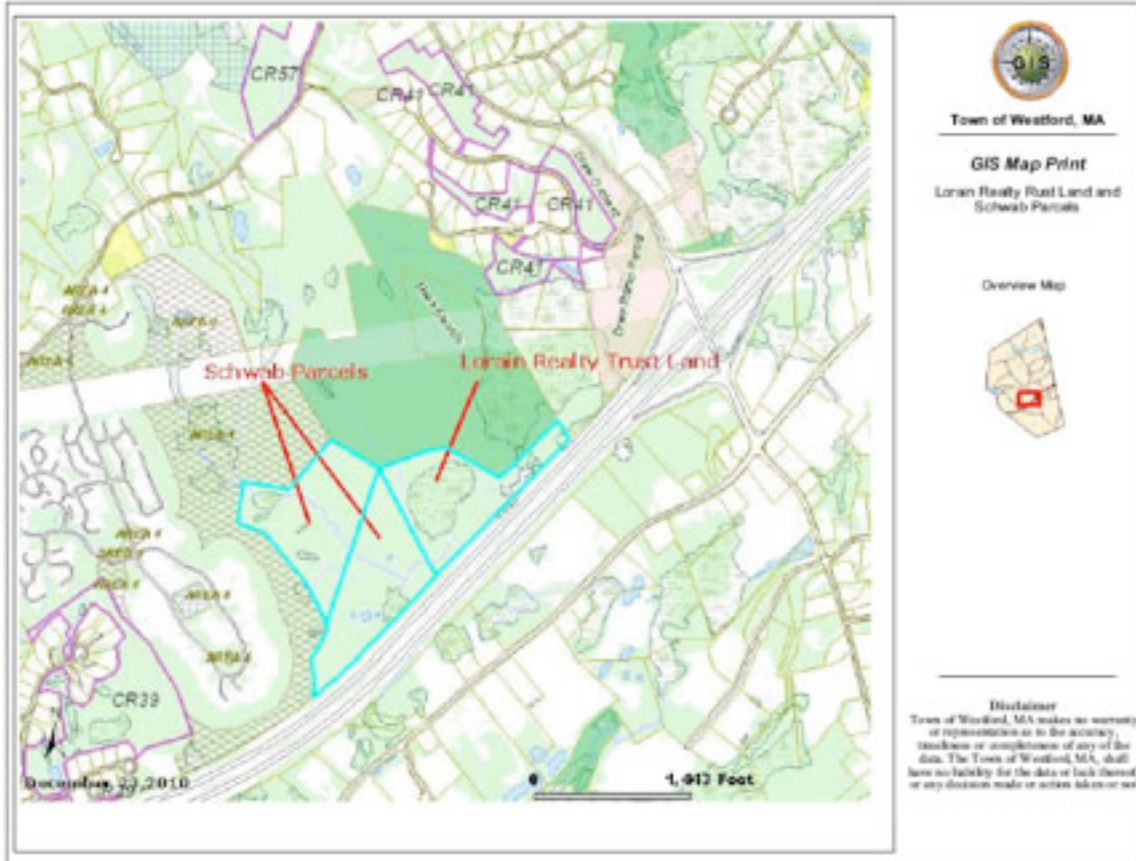
The Schwab land incorporates a miniature wetlands and stream valley ecosystem complex with a diversity of habitat types within its boundaries. From an elevated plateau in the northwest corner of the property a stream cuts sharply down gradient below a steep ridgeline to the northeast towards wooded swamp lands along Route 495, with a smaller tributary coming in from the southwest below a smaller ridge. Due to the orientation towards the south and the sheltering effect of the ridges, the area provides a deer yarding area, as well as important bird and small mammal habitat.

Two apparent vernal pools are located in the southerly portion of the parcels. The parcels have not been logged in many decades and are dominated by a mature forest stand of primarily oak with a stand of larger white pine near wetlands at the lower level of the parcel near Rt. 495. A primarily open understory provides outstanding hiking opportunities and scenic forest vistas and a number of old stone walls are located on the property.



CONSERVATION COMMISSION NEWS

Pages 6-7

Additional Land Under Agreement

Just days before the closing of the Schwab purchase, the Commission also entered into a purchase and sale agreement with Lorain Realty Trust for the purchase of an additional 20 acres adjacent to the Schwab parcel for \$56,750.00. Altogether, including existing adjacent current town owned land under the care and custody of the Conservation Commission, and the conservation overlay zone associated with Hildreth Hills these purchases will create a nearly 210 acre area of contiguous protected open space.





Director of Land Use Management Update

Staffing Changes in Planning / Zoning / Permitting

A period of staffing transition continues since the former Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals Planner vacated the position and moved out of state before Thanksgiving. In late December, the Town contracted with Chris Kluchman AICP to provide interim planning services to the community. Chris is a sole proprietor planning consultant with over twenty years of experience, and is based in Lexington. In the few short weeks that she has been working here, she has provided excellent support to ongoing permitting and planning/policy initiatives, and assisted with the departments' recent transition from the Highway Building to Town Hall.

FUEL ASSISTANCE APPLICATIONS

Are you in need of assistance with your heating costs this year? The Council on Aging is a designated in-take site for the State/Federal Fuel Assistance Program. If you meet the income eligibility guidelines listed below please contact our office at 978 692-5523.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	GROSS ANNUAL INCOME
1	\$30,751.
2	\$40,213.
3	\$49,675.
4	\$59,137.

When you contact us we will mail you a packet of information telling you what you need on hand with you at the time of your appointment. After you gather the requested materials you contact us again to set up a confidential 45 minute appointment at the Cameron Senior Center, 20 Pleasant St. When approved you may qualify for financial assistance this heating season, heating repairs or cleaning along with energy saver appliances. If you are a new applicant with a termination notice on gas or electric bill please call CTI at 978 459-6161. They will schedule an appointment ASAP to avoid termination of utilities.

The GOOD NEIGHBOR ENERGY FUND is available to any qualified Massachusetts resident who is not eligible for state or federal fuel assistance but due to financial difficulty cannot meet a month's fuel expense. A onetime payment is available. You must apply at the Salvation Army's office closest to you. The Lowell office can be reached at 978 458-3396.

Additional resources may be available to you by contacting the Social Worker at the Cameron Senior Center at 978 399-2325. Our office hours are Monday thru Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.